

THE fact that—as I hear from my Canadian friends—to the Princess Royal's visit to that realm has been such a success will not surprise Yorkshire, where Her Royal Highness has built up a new life for herself and is a highly popular figure. Yorkshire, in fact, regards her as a fully naturalised Yorkshirewoman and very much their "own" member of the Royal Family.

The mileage of these Royal visits in more recent times to the Queen's other realms and territories must be reaching astronomical proportions. The Queen herself has been to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the West Indies, Africa (twice, and is to go again) and Ceylon, the Queen Mother has been to Africa, Canada and the United States, Princess Margaret to Africa and the West Indies, and there is now the prospect of the Queen Mother and the Princess going to Ceylon. The Princess Royal has forged still another link in the personal chain by which the Monarchy binds all the Queen's peoples together.

Labour and the Lords

DESPITE the bitterness of the Budget battle I hear talk of inter-party co-operation to increase Labour representation in the House of Lords. In the words of one peer, "If something isn't done quickly we shall soon be lucky to get even one Socialist taking part in some of our debates."

Both Conservative and Labour Party leaders are worried by the problem. It has even been proposed that Sir Anthony Eden should recommend the creation of eighteen new Labour peers.

Even if inter-party agreement were reached, it would not be easy to find suitable recruits. On ideological and financial grounds few Labour M.P.s would welcome translation to the Upper House.

A Possible Candidate

One prominent Socialist who might privately welcome a peerage is Sir Hartley Shawcross. Next to the law, foreign affairs has always been Sir Hartley's prime interest, but now that Mr. Alfred Robens

PEOPLE & THINGS

By ATTICUS

has taken over foreign affairs in the Labour Shadow Cabinet, the prospect of Sir Hartley's ever capturing the Foreign Office is much diminished. He is now more interested in the possibility of becoming Lord Chief Justice.

Even if legal work did not take up so much of his time, there is only limited scope, at the moment, for Sir Hartley's talents in the House of Commons. In the House of Lords he could speak with his spirit and his intellect moved him.

Meanwhile the problem of finding a successor to Lord Jowitt as Leader of the Labour peers cannot be shelved indefinitely.

A Tribute

ONE person whose behaviour under the public glare of the past three weeks has been faultless is the first Mrs. Peter Townsend, now Mrs. John de Laszlo.

For no time in the last three years, let alone in the last three



MRS. JOHN DE LASZLO

weeks, has Mrs. de Laszlo said one single word to the Press about any aspect of her first marriage, or indeed about anything else.

Forced to have a police guard to repel the Press, and special arrangements to cope with her post and with the telephone, she

and her husband have been living in a state of siege.

The offer of a colossal sum from an English Sunday newspaper for a series of signed articles describing her first marriage reached her and was turned down. This was followed by a lesser offer, but still in thousands, for a single unsigned article, which she also refused.

It is easy to say that this is how she ought to have behaved, but in fact it was how she did behave, and many will share the admiration for Mrs. de Laszlo that is being expressed in the highest quarters.

Vintage Oratory

THE lobbies of the House of Commons are still ringing with praise for Mr. A. Butler's speech in the Budget, censured debate. It was notable for its force and clarity and for the rich use of metaphor. Earlier in the debate Mr. Gaiskill had attacked him for being over-fond of obscure allusions.

Mr. Gaiskill was being particularly increased by the Chancellor's remark that "we need to give up easy living on port and over-price pleasant." But an unrepentant Mr. Butler returned to the attack with a description of 1917, 1949 and 1951 as "the vintage years—or perhaps the port vintage years—of Socialist financial incompetence."

In his attempt to equate fiscal failings with fine wine I fear that Mr. Butler's palate was unimpaired. 1947 and 1949 were bumper years for port, but 1951 was, at best, mediocre.

Ink in the Veins

TWENTY-FOUR YEAR-OLD Clive Baxter, son of Sir Evelyn Baxter, P.C., has been given the National Canadian Award for the best writing in the Dominion during the year on the subject of aviation.

From Stowe he went into the R.A.F. for his National Service and then to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police with rank as a lieutenant. After two years as a reporter on the "Evening Standard" he joined the McClelland-Hunter Publishing Company in Toronto.

He recently went in a Canadian Force bomber to the Parnborough aircraft exhibition and also visited the Canadian Air Force in Western Germany. General Gruenther, his Parnborough headquarters, gave him a most important interview covering the European military situation. Young Baxter is a godson of Lord Beaverbrook.

Brown's Boulevards

WHEN the full history of the Oxford road controversy is written, much will be said about the influence of Mr. A. B. Brown. Tomorrow this energetic law dog hopes to amend the latest scheme put before the Oxford City Council.

In pressing his case, Mr. Brown, a former Rhodes Scholar from Australia, will be helped by his close contacts with both town and gown. He is the domestic bursar of Worcester College and a former mayor of the city. During his civic and academic careers he has won the reputation of being Oxford's best after-dinner speaker. There is a good chance that the

new Southern Relief Road, avoiding Christchurch Meadows, will be accepted. Mr. Brown wants to move the Northern Relief Road further north, away from the University laboratories and Rhodes House to Northam Road and Jackstraw Lane.

Since thirteen alternative routes have now been considered, it is hardly surprising that Oxford is becoming known as "the home of lost causeways."

Parnassus Today (No. 2)

ALMOST the only person who has never been drawn into the controversies that surround the play of the moment, "Waiting for Godot," is its author, Mr. Samuel Beckett.

Mr. Beckett is in the curious situation of the minority author whose cause has suddenly been taken up by a large body of well-



MR. SAMUEL BECKETT

meaning middlebrows. He remains what he always was: a retiring and somewhat Irishman who holds firmly to his Elze passport) who would consider it an affront, not to the play but to his interlocutor, to proffer a key to its intricacies. Like most of his works, "Godot" took a long time to write; and, like Mr. Beckett's famous novel "Molloy," it might have taken a long time to find a sponsor had it not been for the enthusiasm of M. Roger Elze, one of the youngest and most brilliant of French men of the theatre.

Echoes of Joyce

"Godot" has been produced in most capitals from Amsterdam to Vienna, and has just been sold to America (it ran for two seasons in Paris before it came to London), but I fancy that the forthcoming production in Dublin is the one which will please its author. For Mr. Beckett, like his great mentor James Joyce, remains a Dubliner at heart.

Many "Godot" enthusiasts have supposed that his luxurious use of language originated in the bad habits of Irish speech; and, just as Beckett himself used to sit rapt and silent in the company of Joyce, whose secretary he was, so do his own admirers detect, in the exchanges of the two silver-tongued tramps, the lingering echoes of that most marvelous of talkers.

The Royal Act

IN view of the reports that revision of the Royal Marriages Act of 1772 may be considered at

the conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers next summer, I hear that Ministers, notably the Lord Chancellor, are being urged by a comment of Lord Brougham, who was Lord Chancellor a century ago.

Lord Brougham's remark to the effect that the Act was then "out-of-date and that the Lord Chancellor in 100 years' time will have to revise it" showed a vision, and an understanding of the speed at which Parliament works with which Lord Kilnair may feel some sympathy.

Now there is diligent research going on to discover the precise circumstances in which Lord Brougham made this comment—probably during the Sussex Race case which was closely related to the Act.

Flying Saucers . . .

IT is possible that the first "flying saucer" is already flying. Mr. Donald Quarles, Secretary of the U.S. Air Force, announced that a new American delta-wing jet, with flying-saucerlike qualities and a "vertical take-off," was to be launched "within a few weeks" at the Ryan Aeronautical Company's San Diego factory.

Another aircraft, which bears an even closer resemblance to the flying saucers of fantasy and science-fiction, is in production by Avro of Canada.

. . . are Warning Up

During his career in Washington Mr. Quarles, a former telephone engineer, has had many opportunities for dramatic utterance. At the Pentagon he ran both the atomic-missile programme and the earth-satellite programme.

But in all his dealings with the public Mr. Quarles has successfully sought the banal touch. His speech, heralding the flying-saucer era is typical: "We are now entering a period of aviation technology in which aircraft of unusual characteristics will begin to appear."

Speed of Thought

IN his speech to the Pilgrims on Tuesday, Mr. Harold Stassen recalled some optimistic estimates of Britain's economic future he had made in 1947. He said: "I think it will now be agreed that in my estimate I was conservative."

Mr. Stassen was startled by the hullabaloo from his Budget-conscious audience, but he recovered his reputation as a diplomat by adding the impromptu remark: "Of course in a liberal sense without regard to labour."

Censorial Honesty

A CORRESPONDENT writes: "The Soviet censor's somewhat naive denial of censorship and the returned opened letter to which you referred last Sunday remind me of an opened letter I once received marked: 'Open in error to see what was inside.'"

Single or Double?

A DISTINGUISHED cleric searched the library shelves of the Athenaeum without success and then rang the bell.

A young and recently recruited waiter appeared.

"Bring me a Crockford, would you?" said the cleric.

In due course the waiter reappeared: "I'm very sorry, sir, but they tell me the bar doesn't open until eleven."